

SECOND BRIDGE: THE RENAISSANCE  
PART 2: JOSQUIN AND HIS FOLLOWERS / FRENCH MUSIC

1. Theorist: Tinctoris (1435–1511)
  - a. Estimation of music of his time in the Art of Counterpoint (1477): Nothing over 40 years old which is thought by the learned as worthy of performance
  - b. Brought Gregorian “mode” to polyphonic music.
  
2. Josquin des Prez
  - i. Martin Luther: “Josquin is master of the notes, which must express what he desires; other composers can only do what the notes dictate.”
  - ii. Other contemporary writers praised figures such as Michelangelo by calling him the Josquin of painting and architecture.
  - iii. Stubbornness may have cost him opportunities. A “letter of recommendation” comparing Josquin to Heinrich Isaac (another major composer) for Ercole (Hercules) d’Este, Duke of Ferrara:

“To me [Isaac] seems well suited to serve Your Lordship, more so than Josquin, because [Isaac] is more good-natured and companionable, and will compose new works more often. It is true that Josquin composes better, but he composes when he wants to and not when one wants him to, and he is asking 200 ducats in salary while Isaac will come for 120.”
  - b. Josquin continued some trends; Created cantus firmus in Missa “**HErcUIEs dUx FErrArIE**”
  - c. However, well known for a move toward greater simplicity
  - d. Secular Music
    - i. Frottola: short songs sung basically **homophonically**
    - ii. bawdy or humorous (sometimes sexually explicit) texts
    - iii. *El grillo*
  - e. (NON-ISORHYTHMIC) Motet: *Ave Maria...virgo serena* (ca. 1490?)
    - i. Points of imitation
    - ii. “Pervasive myth of pervasive imitation”
  
3. Petrucci – printing!
  
4. Unlikely to have time, but maybe (if not, pick up after England):
  - a. **Instruments and Instrumental forms:**
  - b. The *basse danse*
    - i. c. 1500
    - ii. Dance tenors which were improvised on top of.
    - iii. Preserved in the book of Margaret of Austria (not really Austrian...northern European)
    - iv. Widowed state accounts for the unusual colors of the book.
    - v. Four types of steps indicated by letters under notes (s = single step; d = double; r = retrograde, i.e., backwards; b = bransle: a sideways step or shake).
  - c. *hauts* and *bas instruments*

- d. **Song and instruments: Claudin de Sermisy, *Tant que vivray***
- e. Main melody in top voice, but also a type of Tenorlied [that is: song with melodic tenor that can be sung separately]
- f. Performance by wind or string instruments possible
- g. Successful form: Voice and lute.
- h. Arrangements for keyboard

**Next Class: Discussion on how to revise a research paper; student paper presentations**

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21M.220 Early Music  
Fall 2010

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.